

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Applicants respectfully request the following amendments to the claim set:

1. (Previously presented) A pocket closure device for a bag, wherein said bag comprises a top end, a bottom end, and an outer surface, said pocket closure device comprising:
 - a storage receptacle having a front panel, side panels, and an interior space, wherein said storage receptacle is accessible from the exterior of the bag,;
 - a biasing rod having a first end extending from below a pivot axis at the bottom of the front panel and along a perimeter edge of the front panel and a second end of the rod also extending from below the pivot axis and along a second perimeter edge of the front panel; and;
 - a pivot point retaining means wherein a counter-force is created when the biasing rod is bent, so as to bias the front panel in a substantially closed position.
2. (Canceled)
3. (Previously presented) The pocket closure device of claim 1, wherein said storage receptacle further comprises a grip element coupled to an outer surface of said front panel to facilitate leverage and transport of said bag.
4. (Original) The pocket closure device of claim 3, wherein said grip element comprises a flap coupled to said outer surface of said front panel to accommodate a hand of a user.

5. (Previously Presented) The pocket closure device of claim 1, wherein said biasing rod further comprises a handle element to facilitate leveraging said biasing rod to allow access to said interior space.

6. (Previously Presented) The pocket closure device of claim 1, wherein said biasing rod further comprises a substantially U-shaped resilient member having two open ends and an adjoining bridge portion, wherein said adjoining bridge portion is coupled to said front panel, and wherein each of said two open ends is coupled to an outer surface of said bag beyond said storage receptacle such that said front panel may be selectively biased with respect to said bag.

7. (Previously Presented) The pocket closure device of claim 1, wherein said biasing rod comprises material selected from the group consisting of plastic, metal, and an elastomeric compound.

8. (Previously Presented) A pocket assembly for facilitating retention of and access to accessories placed therein, said pocket assembly comprises:

an accessory pouch having a front, back and sides wherein said accessory pouch is capable of receiving and retaining

accessories,; and

at least one resilient biasing member laterally disposed along and attached to one of said sides of said accessory pouch extending from below said pouch, said at least one resilient member capable of being selectively actuated by simultaneously bearing a tension load and a compression load along its vertical axis to allow access to an interior space defined by said accessory pouch.

9. (Original) The pocket assembly of claim 8, wherein said accessory pouch further comprises at least one aperture to facilitate ventilation and moisture release.

10. (Currently amended) The pocket assembly of claim 8, wherein said accessory pouch further comprises a grip element coupled to said front of said accessory pouch to facilitate leverage and transport of said ~~a bag~~ accessory pouch of said pocket device.

11. (Original) The pocket assembly of claim 10, wherein said grip element comprises a flap coupled to said accessory pouch to accommodate a hand of a user.

12. (Original) The pocket assembly of claim 8, wherein said accessory pouch further comprises a handle element to facilitate leveraging said at least one resilient member to allow access to said interior space.

13. (Original) The pocket assembly of claim 8, wherein said at least one resilient member further comprises a handle element to facilitate leveraging said at least one resilient member to allow access to said interior space.

14. (Previously Presented) The pocket assembly of claim 8, wherein said at least one resilient member comprises a substantially U-shaped resilient member having two open ends and an adjoining bridge portion, wherein said adjoining bridge portion is coupled to a face of said accessory pouch, and wherein each of said two open ends is coupled to an outer surface of a bag beyond said accessory pouch such that said face of said accessory pouch may be selectively biased with respect to said outer surface of said bag.

15. (Currently amended) A bag comprising:

an outer housing for receiving and retaining a plurality of items;
a pocket formed with said outer housing for receiving and retaining at

least one accessory, wherein said pocket comprises:

a front panel;

a bottom support panel;

a back panel, wherein said back panel is recessed into said outer housing;

expandable side panels coupled between said front panel and said back panel such that said side panels fold when the front panel is positioned against the bag and expand ~~in-accordion-fashion~~ as said front panel is opened to gain access to the inside of said pocket; and

at least one biasing element longitudinally disposed, along said front panel and coupled to said outer housing that serves to bias said front panel against said outer housing to ~~close~~ automatically seal said pocket.

16. (Canceled)

17. (Previously Presented) The bag of claim 15, further comprising a guard element attached proximate an opening of said pocket, wherein said guard element extends beyond said opening to protect said at least one accessory retained therein.

18. (Previously presented) The bag of claim 17, wherein said guard element is attached to said outer housing.

19. (Previously Presented) The bag of claim 17, wherein said guard element is attached to said pocket, wherein said guard element may be selectively positioned to substantially cover said opening.

20. (Previously Presented) The bag of claim 17, wherein said guard element is removably attached to at least one of said outer housing and said pocket.

21. (Previously Presented) The pocket of claim 15, further comprising apertures within at least one of said front panel, said bottom support panel, and said side panels to permit ventilation and moisture release from said pocket.

22. (Previously Presented) The bag of claim 15, further comprising a grip element integrated into at least one of said outer housing and said pocket to facilitate leverage and transport of said bag, wherein said grip element comprises a flap having dimensions sufficient to accommodate a grip of a user.

23. (Previously Presented) The bag of claim 15, wherein said pocket further comprises a handle element to facilitate leveraging said front panel of said pocket to allow access to said at least one accessory.

24. (Previously Presented) The bag of claim 15, wherein said at least one biasing element of said pocket comprises a substantially U-shaped resilient member having two terminal ends and an adjoining bridge portion, wherein said adjoining bridge portion is integrated into said front panel, and wherein each of said terminal ends is coupled to said housing beyond said bottom support panel of said pocket such that said front panel may be selectively biased with respect to said outer housing.

25. (Currently amended) A method for facilitating retention of and access to items in a bag, said method comprising:

providing a bag having a pocket member integrated with said bag with an opening for receiving and retaining at least one item;

coupling to a front panel of said pocket member a first portion of at least one elongate biasing member; and

attaching a second portion of said at least one elongate biasing member to said bag, wherein said at least one elongate biasing member is attached to said bag and extends from below a pivot axis up the edge of the front panel and straightens to ~~elose~~ automatically seal shut said pocket member.

26. (Previously presented) The method of claim 25, wherein said coupling to said front panel further comprises disposing said at least one elongate biasing member substantially adjacent said front panel and attaching said first portion of said at least one elongate biasing member to an upper portion of said front panel proximate said opening.

27. (Original) The method of claim 26, wherein said attaching a second portion of said at least one elongate biasing member to said bag further comprises attaching said second portion of said at least one elongate biasing member to a bottom end of said bag substantially beyond said pocket member such that said upper portion of said front panel may be selectively biased with respect to said bag.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 25, further comprising attaching a handle element to said biasing member to facilitate leveraging said pocket member to obtain selective access to an interior of said pocket member.

29. (Original) The method of claim 25, further comprising integrating a grip element into said front panel of said pocket member to facilitate leverage and transport of said bag, said grip element having dimensions sufficient to accommodate a grip of a user.

30. (Currently amended) The method of claim 25, further comprising coupling to at least one of said bag and said pocket member a guard member proximate ~~an~~ said opening to said pocket member, wherein said guard member extends beyond said opening of said pocket member to protect an interior of said pocket member when said pocket member is closed.

31. (Original) The method of claim 25, further comprising providing apertures in said pocket member to facilitate at least one of cleaning, ventilating and draining said pocket member.

32. (Currently amended) A storage apparatus comprising:
a bag having a side and a pocket integrated therein, the pocket further comprising:
a front panel; and
a first and second ~~substantially triangular~~ side panel biasing means
coupled to said front panel wherein the side panels are made of elastic material
capable of biasing said front panel to said bag, and thereby creating an
automatic seal.

33. (Currently amended) A retaining system comprising:
a bag having a clam-like pocket integrated therein wherein a biasing
means pivotally closes said pocket along an axis of rotation disposed along a
bottom of said pocket wherein said pocket is automatically sealed upon closure.

34. (Currently amended) A bag having a pocket formed therein, the pocket comprising:
- a pocket;
 - a flexible rod disposed along the edge of the pocket and extending below a bottom of the pocket to contact a surface of said bag; and
 - a retaining loop disposed above the end of said rod, wherein said flexible rod enables said pocket to automatically seal shut.
35. (Previously Presented) A retaining system comprising:
- a bag further having a clam-like pocket integrated therein wherein a biasing means pivotally closes said pocket along an axis of rotation disposed along a bottom of the pocket, wherein a user grip is formed in a panel of the pocket.